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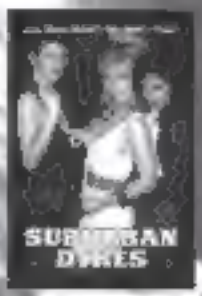

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Heather Findlay

I am very excited to introduce myself to you as the new editor of On Our Backs. I am a writer, a lesbian and an AIDS activist, and I recently returned to San Francisco from New York where I got my Ph.D. in English from Cornell. In 1980 I published Positions, a single-issue feminist pornographic magazine, and I've been published widely on topics ranging from sodomy in Shakespeare to lesbian dildo use. As a longtime supporter of On Our Backs, I feel like my new position here is a dream come true.

I have all kinds of exciting plans for the future, the first of which is to make the magazine more "queer". On Our Backs will always be an erotic magazine by and about lesbians, but in the future we'll have more representations of other sexual minorities like sex workers, trans-gender folk, bisexual women, etc. On Our Backs will also strengthen its reputation for controversy by publishing material that both pleases and provokes, including special issues on what's hot in lesbian sexual culture (our first special issue will be in March on lesbians, sex and motherhood, so get your turkey basters ready). Most importantly, On Our Backs will be as sizzling as ever, with fiction covering a wider variety of erotic scenarios and cultural contexts, and lots of high-quality photography of the sexiest dykes we can get our hands on.

On Our Backs has seen a lot of staff changes this summer. Our previous editor Nancy Sheiner, who enhanced the national reputation of our feature stories and interviews and spearheaded the "Censorship Update" column, has left to pursue her freelance writing career. Assistant editor Shar Rednour, whose impeccable taste left its mark on nearly every aspect of On Our Backs, will be continuing her career in parties and video. As I write, Diane Anderson, former editor of New Orleans' lesbian and gay weekly and self described "Native American/Chicana lipstick lesbian" (whom we said that on her resume we just had to have her), is speeding westward to fill Shar's shoes. Design vet Bonnie Simons (look out for her mug in our next issue!) is psyched to succeed our art director Robin Simmons, who spent four years kicking On Our Backs' butt into desktop publishing hi-tech shape. Finally, be sure to see our beloved ex-circulation manager Andrea M. Cobb on tour with Pussy Tourette as one of Pussy's dorky-girl mates.

I want to be available to all of On Our Backs' cherished readers and contributors, so please feel free to call or write. If you are a writer, a photographer or a cartoonist, I'd love to talk to you about your work; as for you, dear reader, it's always important to me to know what it is that you love—and hate, too!—about our magazine.

Heather Findlay
Editor

PS. Stay tuned for Lee Delaria and some shocking British kink in our next issue!

Laura Federico is a freelance writer who lives in San Francisco and does various squalid day jobs to support her madcap lifestyle. Her first book of collected short fiction, Owning Our Desire, will soon debut.

Victoria Staggs Elliott is a writer and gay male porno reviewer based in Chicago and a proud member of Generation X and the Poverty Jet Set.

Karen Carnival is a transplanted city dyke who left the queer playground of San Francisco in search of cushy pleasures. She's also a frequent flyer—almost limo, anyone?

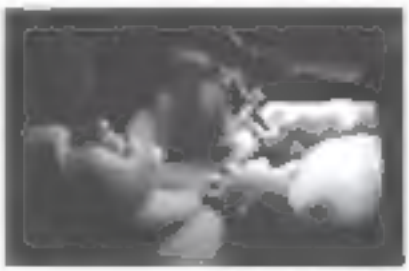
Annie Sprinkle. Shar grovels at her guru's feet for inadvertently not printing Annie's bio in the last issue. Annie Sprinkle will be in San Francisco to teach her Slurs and Goddesses three-day intensive workshop together with Nwala. Sexually adventurous women are invited to enjoy the secrets of Sacred Sluttism. Yoni massage, energy orgasms and a sensuous tantric ritual. October 8-10, call 415-995-4641 for more information.

Amy Marquez is working on shooting more women of color interested in modeling? She also just got fucked with her very first pink latex glove.

Zannah Nee

Zannah Nee is a local freelance photographer. She studied at Hampshire college under Carrie Mae Weems and Jerome Liebling. Currently working on a book of photographs of necrophiliacs called *Where dead men go...* To be published by M. Read, friends of photography.

Mimi=Freed is a queerdo who thinks k.d. lang is too.



Catherine Saalfield

Catherine Saalfield gets a safe tattoo from Alistair Fate. She can't say there isn't pleasure in pain.

Inna Valin is eagerly awaiting the Pope's arrival in Denver and is trying to convince Mother Theresa to model. She's also waiting at her PO Box 16247134 Denver, Co. 80216 for love letters, religious items and orders for prints.

Inna Valin

Cover Models Jessi and Janet found each other three years ago and started doing performance art eroticizing safer sex. They are original members of the Peer Safer Sex Slut Team and got married last August.

LETTERS

Virginity Ouch!

I have nothing against sado-masochists, so if you want to have your hymen painfully torn and bleeding, that's ok with me. But, to my knowledge, it's not necessary because you can use dildos or similar objects in graduated sizes to stretch the hymen painlessly. This is probably better than having the hymen cut surgically, since a female gynecologist told me that women who have had that procedure say that it makes penetration painful.

We need to stop using the term "virginity" in a sexual context. The concepts of "virgins" and "non-virgins" have such ugly, divisive stereotypes that go along with them. Since "virgin" originally meant "a woman not owned by a man" I think all women are virgins in that sense, regardless of sexual preference or sexual activities.

Adele Hunt
Memphis, TN

White Middle Class Rights, Now!

Hold the phone a minute! Who is Judith Halberstam and why is she reviewing films for you? I'll admit that I haven't seen Claire of the Moon yet and probably won't until it comes out on video because I live in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains. But I've read the book, I've seen the "Moments" video, and I don't see all this dreadful "issue of...identity politics" Ms. Halberstam is so concerned about. If she wants dildos, butch-femme, and dripping sex she can go see a porno flick. This is a love story for crying out loud! And by the way, what's the matter with the movie being "white and middle class"? I happen to be white and middle class and I like white middle class lesbian love stories. If Ms. Halberstam wants a film depicting lesbians as dirt poor, unwashed ethnically mixed, with "desire and violence between women" as in the "far superior Basic Instinct," she can produce her own film. I won't go see it but she and her friend with the ice pick can have a ball!

As I see it this film gives us what's the best yet. Okay, so it's urban, up-scale, and vanilla, and therefore not for everyone. But maybe Nicole Conn will make another, even better film. I could look forward to that a lot!

Sunny Hinshaw
Lowell, AR

...And Vanilla Rights, too!

It was with a great deal of anger that I read your recent savaging of Nicole Conn's film Claire of the Moon. I have absolutely no quarrel with your reviewer not liking the film. Many dykes didn't. If your reviewer did not like the film because it was too "vanilla" for her, fine. (But) one of the desires expressed over and over again in your publication is the need for lesbians to accept the expression of love in all of its various physical forms. Seems to me it is time for you to put your money where your mouth is. Not all dykes come out with a fist up their cunts. Many of us came out much as Claire did, with a lot of fear, confusion and ultimately an awakening about our sexuality.

I enjoy expressing my love for women in various forms from "vanilla" to S/M. I feel it is time for lesbians to get over being politically correct about lesbian sexual expression. It seems to me until you can extend to others what you are requesting for yourselves you have a long lonely road to travel.

Unsigned
Denver, CO

More Howling at (Claire of) the Moon

[Judith Halberstam] complains that there's "no sex" in [Claire of the Moon] because there are "no dildos, no butch-femme roles, no fist fucking," and that the movie is "behind the times" sexually. [But] vanilla sex is physical sensuality/touching without mental images or fantasies, and it is what most people begin with. Some remain content with it. I went to see Claire twice because it is culturally affirming for me in a way that virtually no other films are.

Thyme S. Seigel
Kensington, CA

Halberstam responds:

I did not fault Claire of the Moon for only portraying vanilla sex, nor is my dislike for the film equivalent to the suppression of sexual freedom. Let me just clarify my objections: given the kinds of debates that we have witnessed in lesbian and gay communities about "positive" and "negative" images of ourselves, I felt that it was time to insist that we examine exactly what we mean by these terms. If Basic Instinct *was a negative depiction of lesbians because it showed us as murderers, then for many folks Claire was positive because it depicted two dykes getting it on. But calling this film "positive" or "affirmative" actually masks the fact that, first, the film is badly made, badly written and horribly acted; and second, it simply remakes every other mainstream film about lesbianism from Lianna to Desert Hearts. Most importantly, Claire fails to represent the diversity of lesbian communities, or to capture what makes lesbian sex queer, that is, different from mainstream heterosexual America. The reader from Arkansas (who admits that she has not seen Claire, but who feels nevertheless that "this film gives us what's best yet") asks, "what's the matter with white and middle-class?" If I point out the suspicious and anxious link she makes between "dirt poor, unwashed" (!) and "ethnically mixed," you will know exactly what I think is wrong with white middle-class films: all too often they mirror the racist and classist biases of the audience they appeal to.*

ON OUR BACKS

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Devouring Hammer & Dawn Wan

I just finished devouring the new issue I received as a gift, and was overjoyed to see the interview with Barbara Hammer. I am attracted to older women, and am getting fed up with the images with which society and, surprisingly, the lesbian community, inundate us. Older women have so much to offer us: their wisdom, experience...and they are so hot! I am very interested in seeing Barbara Hammer's films and ready to "experience" and not just watch a movie for once.

In general I was pleased to see more coverage of women of different ages and backgrounds. Dawn Wan is to die for. Not all of us are 18-24, white, with pierced lips and tattoos on our breasts and behinds. Keep up the good work!

Dee Dee DeCarte
Grand Ledge, MI

Waking Up to Barbara Hammer

I'd like to thank you for the interview with Barbara Hammer. I found it to be awakening, enlightening, and interesting. It will add to my growth as a human being, a woman and as a lesbian. I look forward to seeing my first Barbara Hammer film in the near future. I think she is a remarkable woman, and I also think that our world could use a lot more like her!

Josee Giroux
Montreal, Canada

Keep Your Laws Off Nina!

Greetings from Nebraska! For many years I have loved and admired Nina Hartley, and I am dismayed to learn of the ridiculous charges leveled at Nina and her fellows (can I say that?) in Las Vegas [see Censorship Update MJ 93]. Thanks to OOB, once again I see an attempt to interfere with people's lives by law enforcement officers whose personal agenda extends beyond the reasonable bounds of the law. I offer my encouragement to keep doing the excellent work you and the staff have done, particularly in the Censorship Update section; I will continue to be a loyal subscriber so long as you do.

G. Matteson
Norfolk, NE

Correction: In our July/August issue, the Newsnote entitled "Don't Be Holey" was misattributed to Stephanie Rosenbaum. Sorry Girlfriend!

> Older women have so much to offer us: their wisdom, experience... and they are so hot!

Disneyland for Homophobes

The letter below was enclosed with a—rather paranoid—advertisement for the Arizona Womyn's Festival, with "womyn born womyn only" and the warnings "not to divulge the location or directions to non-lesbians," and "DO NOT ASK THE TOWNSPEOPLE WHERE THE FESTIVAL IS" underlined. —Ed

Greetings from Arizona—a homophobe's Disneyland! Thought I'd pass along this little tidbit so you can see that it's really OK to be different in Arizona, as long as one isn't too different. Also, note the level of hiding that goes on here. Truly sad. Those of us accustomed to the freedom of the California lifestyle tend to take our relative liberty for granted. I think it's important for us to remember our sisters who continue to suffer the bondage of small-mindedness.

The saddest part, however, is the unavailability of OOB. I'm about to dry up and blow away without my OOB fix. I recently moved to this literbar due to poor economic conditions in the San Francisco north bay area, and hoped to rely on OOB to alleviate my terminal homesickness. Guess I'll just have to subscribe when I get a job.

Scorpio Black
Arizona

Gaga Over Non-monogamy

I was really happy to see the non-monogamy issue raised in the "Ask Fanny" section of your magazine. It may just be that I don't have the money to keep up on all the latest publications but I've never seen the topic touched on in any other lesbian magazines.

I am hardly an expert in the field but I do feel that I have a few hard learned lessons to share with others. The biggest obstacles are the stereotypes the word "non-monogamy" conjures up. For example, because I'm non-monogamous does not mean that I always have someone to go home with or that I sleep with anyone who's interested. What it does mean is a ton of discussion with each new romantic interest. I have to make sure each person understands they can't change me, and that it isn't a matter of not having found "the right person" yet. Then I have to weed out those who see me as a great one-night stand or as someone to be with until they find "the real thing."

On the positive side, there is the wonderful feeling of having a loved one come back to you, still loving you after an encounter with someone else. It's wonderful to lie in each other's arms and honestly talk about others you also love, knowing that it does not affect your relationship and that, in fact, the support and understanding makes your love stronger.

It has been close to three years of non-monogamy for me and (though it's much easier now) jealousy is always a battle. Communication is the only thing that helps get you past it. It is important in every relationship but much more so in a non-monogamous one. If you aren't ready to be open, vulnerable and communicative, you aren't ready for non-monogamy. If you are ready for true freedom of expression, a lot of hard work and inner re-evaluation, non-monogamy has the potential to be a very worthwhile lifestyle.

Jenny Rome
Los Angeles, CA

Dildo and Harness How-To

In July/August's "Ask Fanny," a young woman wrote in with her fears about using a dildo and harness. Fanny's answer was right on the mark. As a young lesbian, I also had such fears. It was not until I was 32 years old that I enjoyed the pleasures of another female strapping on a dildo and harness and fucking me. How about an article with photos on various types of harnesses and dildos, their care and maintenance, and ways to use them with your partner?

April Powers
Baton Rouge, LA

Great idea, April! We'll work on it. —Ed

We welcome your comments. Please send letters to Letters Editor, On Our Backs, 526 Castro St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Every letter must be accompanied by the sender's name and address. Letters may be shortened or edited for clarity.

ASK FANNY

DEAR FANNY: I'm in a monogamous relationship. We love each other and enjoy spending time together but don't have sex very often. Three years ago, I would approach her when I needed to feel close and wanted sex, but she would get offended and I would get my feelings hurt. So, I quit approaching her and would wait for her to come to me. The problem is waiting for her. Three or four weeks may go by before she makes love to me.

At first, I tried to be understanding. My lover was abused as a child and didn't allow herself to become close to anyone to protect herself from further harm. Then, a long term relationship that ended hurt her badly. So, she has a hard time trusting.

I've talked to her about our sex problem several times. She feels bad and wants to do better, but it's been twenty days now since she made love to me. I've made love to her twice during that time. She approached me, but didn't return the favor.

I was in a seven year relationship before in which we only had sex every four to six weeks, as she didn't care much about sex either. I've been a lesbian for over twenty years and can't understand what's going on here. I want to share a closeness with my lover, be touched, caressed, and feel free to make love to her, too. I'm at my wits end. What can I do? I don't want to be with anyone else.

-Lonely

DEAR LONELY: I urge you both to get serious counseling—her as a survivor of child abuse and you for co-dependent behaviors. She is hiding anger and denial beneath her sexual lethargy, and you are acting as her willing doormat. And then you service her when she's in the mood! Indeed!

Stop this self-destructive behavior now. Just say No! No, I will not be in a sex starved relationship. No, I will not do all the initiating, nor will I wait in futility for your advances. No, I will not make love to you if desire is not reciprocal.

Along with your therapy, try discussing your sexual fantasies. Therein lies your fuel for igniting passion, and I'll bet my career you two have plenty of passion smoldering. Perhaps you can turn your dependency and her coldness on its head and eroticize it. If she wants you to beg for sex, how about doing it with your hands bound and your legs spread! Or, if she wants to ignore your desire, try sucking her off with a butt plug in your ass and something to rub your clit against. She can pretend she didn't know you had a screaming orgasm.

Once you let the fire rage, the caresses and kisses will follow. So will insight into your behavior and relationship that will augment your therapy. Good luck.

TURN YOUR DEPENDENCY ON ITS' HEAD AND EROTICIZE IT.

DEAR FANNY: Help! I'm afraid that I'm caught in the straight-girl look-alike zone. Yes, I'm queer as a three dollar bill, but I can't get women to look at me! I drive down the freeway with my pink triangle sticker only to be stared at by men!

In San Francisco, I've actually been stared out of gay establishments. One club owner gently directed me out of her bar and towards the straight clubs. Perhaps they think I'm not serious about homosexuality if I'm not wearing a leather jacket. Why are lesbians so quick to reject other women?

Please try to persuade your readers to look at all women as possible homosexuals. For once and for all, there is no Gay Look! I want these city girls to know what they are missing out on. Tell them to give "straight-faced" people a chance at being gay.

-Shut Out in the City

DEAR SHUT OUT: You sound like a wild and crazy gal from the 'burbs, ready for fun in the big city with a good looking city sapphic type. There's lots of dykes ready to meet you, don't you worry. They see that pink triangle. It's just that your drivin' too fast for their mopeds to keep up!

Citi-town dykes like to give the newcomers a hard time, especially if you're a suburban girl. Consider it an initiation rite. Think of getting kicked out of a bar as a good sign. Next time, wear what you were wearing, only do it up, drag-style, even more. Then, when they try to kick you out, bust a glass across the bar. That will get the attention of the honey-pie your cruisin' for.

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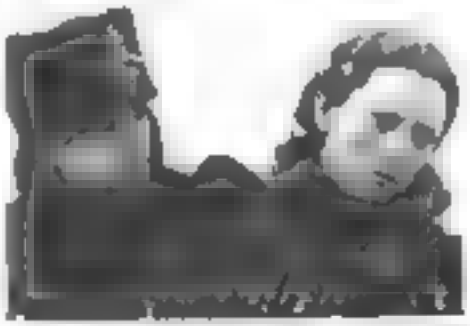

POTTER COMPLETELY REFUSES TO CAPITALIZE ON THE QUEER SEXUALITY INVOKED BY ORLANDO'S & SASHA'S LOVE AFFAIR.

JUDITH HALBERSTAM

for Bauer is making herself vulnerable by wearing a suit and tie. She has to negotiate the harassment she gets from both sides of the gender line. The film, Vera addresses the sexual implications of cross-dressed desire.

Bauer's performance of maleness is not an androgynous act. Although the actress does look slightly like a boy at times, Bauer's swagger and her assertion of her own brand of masculinity are what make her drag effect so powerful. Now, seven years after the film, Bauer is a female-to-male transsexuality and all kinds of female sexuality make a fascinating backdrop to her.

The final queer transgender film that uses gender to [illegible] is Jon Dougherty and Leslie Singer's [illegible] of gender warriors, writers and performers living in San Francisco's Mission district who have transformed themselves into the gay writer/dramatist Joe Orton and are trying to get away with it. The hero loss expose exactly what is in a name or a gender by becoming Joe Ortons, these low-low-low-budget, low-expectation dyke playwrights become [illegible] who gain publicity and win awards just [illegible] themselves. In this case, being themselves means living the life of dykes in the Mission, celebrating finding a parking spot, lots of sex, a little writing, holidays in Santa Cruz, Beatles imitations, and of course, [illegible] dinner.

The one limitation of [illegible] is that only one but [illegible] women [illegible] lower [illegible], doubles the [illegible] pleasure. Additionally, [illegible] gender [illegible] cation the fact that the loss dress in Joe Orton drag (leather hats, [illegible] shirts, [illegible] else in their lives and [illegible] the Joe-Joe effect. In Roger's [illegible] male [illegible] upon an androgynous surface. In drag, male drag depends upon the right suit and tie and a certain swagger. In Joe-Joe, however, we have a whole new gender game. Joe and Joe are not particularly male or female or androgynous, yet they are certainly lesbian and they are definitely regular Joes. Perhaps as Joe-Joe seems to suggest, we should use our names to signify our genders: she's a Jane, he's a Dick. They are Joes.

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Sex Yes, Gay Sex No

RR Donnelley, the printer who refused to publish ***Gay Times*** and ***Gay Sex*** from, respectively, Beacon Press and Alyson Publications, changed its tune to the sound of money when **Madonna** asked them to do her smash tome ***Sex***.—*M5*

Sex Out Ou Non?

In our last issue we reported the effects of Madonna's book on the citizens of **South Africa**. This month's bulletin comes from the land of l'amour. believe it or not. **Avenire de la Culture** ("Future of Culture"), a pro-censorship group in France, is suing Madonna and her publisher, trying to get all copies of the book withdrawn from the country.—*MS*

"Just a Routine Check, Ma'am"

In late April and early May, **Canada Customs** carried out its biggest book bust ever when it seized hundreds of titles from **Inland Book Company**, a U.S. small-press distributor. Although customs officials deny that they were "targeting or harassing" any particular distributor or retailer, the titles chosen for detainment suggest otherwise. titles under "inspection" include ***Susie Bright's Sexual Reality***, ***The First Stroke***, and the ***Lesbian S/M Safety Manual***. Titles "prohibited outright" include ***Macho Sluts***, ***Taste of Latex***, ***#8 Backfire*** and ***The Story of O***.—*HF*

Zoned Out

Riding the wave of or recent efforts to outlaw nude dancing, the **New York City Council** is considering bills that would designate adult theaters, video stores and nightclubs as a "public nuisance," and would prevent them from operating within 500 ft. of a residential neighborhood, school or church. In the meantime, the **Forest Hills Nightclub**, a nude dancing club whose controversial opening inspired the bills, shut down when its besieged landlord offered to buy back their lease.—*HF*

The Law According to RICO

Ferris Alexander, owner of a chain of adult book and video stores, was busted, jailed and fined recently when seven of his titles were deemed obscene. That's business as usual under the **Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organization Act** (RICO). What's unusual is that the feds then confiscated $9,000,000 of Alexander's property and sent three truckloads of books and tapes—none of which had been judged obscene—to their fiery demise at a local incinerator. Alexander appealed to the Supreme Court where the majority led by **William Rehnquist** decided that, according to RICO, the confiscation and destruction of Alexander's property does not violate his first amendment rights.—*HF*

Squeamish in Seattle

Two Seattle bookstores were protested and vandalized this June by a group called **Dykes Against Porn** (DAP). DAP leveled charges of racism at the May/June cover of ***On Our Backs***, which featured Asian-American model **Dawn Wan** in a flame motif. Claiming that the cover "says white males should be getting off on setting Asian girls on fire," DAP spray-painted "Fuck On Our Backs" on the sidewalk and slashed copies of the magazine. Not all Seattle dykes are neo-Dworkinians, however. Suzanne Sommerdorf and Tanya Turkovich wrote to the **Seattle Gay News** that "the woman looks empowered, for she has her head high with her hands on her hips. We interpret the fire-woman as a goddess, or a flame nymph. She is beautiful and strong." As for Dawn Wan herself, she told On Our Backs that she is "shocked" by the protest.—*HF*

Waiting on the "Erotic Eleven"

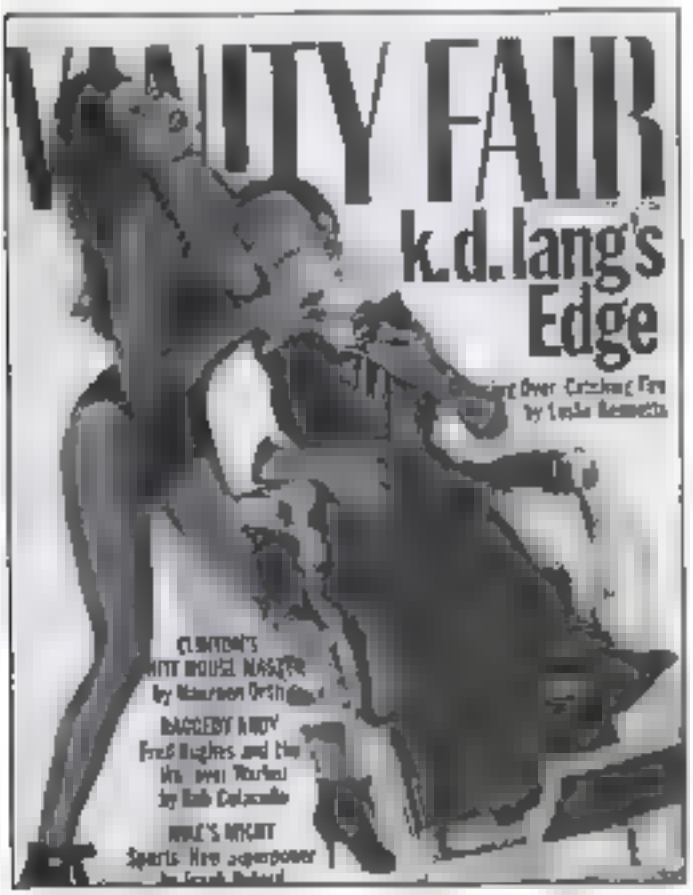
The trial of **Nina Hartley** and ten other female erotic performers who were charged in Nevada for "infamous crimes against nature" (see On Our Backs, May/April 1993) has been delayed. Hartley's defense team successfully argued that Nevada had unfairly appointed a very conservative judge to the trial. To help free the Erotic Eleven, send checks to The Freedom Fund, 2950 Shattuck Avenue #41, Berkeley, CA 94704.—*HF*

Now you have it...

Let's face it. Packing it may come in handy for some things, but when it comes time for a pit stop, a girl's still got to squat. Shouldn't we be able to stand up for our rights? A California entrepreneur thinks so. To be marketed under the unlikely name of **LaFemme**, this cone shaped funnel will allow you to direct the flow as you will—onto a wall, into the sewer, wherever. But don't start leaving the seat up!—*SR*

...Now He Doesn't!

Claiming that her husband tried to rape her, a Virginia woman cut off two-thirds of his penis with a kitchen knife in late June. Getting rid of it wasn't that easy though: as she fled in her car she realized the penis was still with her and had to toss it out the window and an intersection. While the ***New York Times*** has been obsessing over whether or not doctors were able to sew the man's penis back on, we haven't heard much about the rape allegation.—*HF*

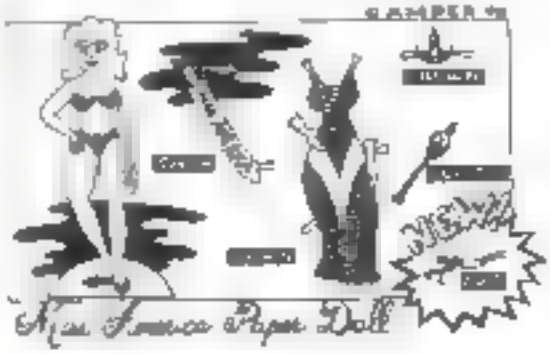


k.d.'s Lesbian Vanities

Forget Demi in the buff. The ***Vanity Fair*** cover to collect was surely August's shaving scene between butch dreamboat **k.d. lang** and supermodel **Cindy Crawford**. Conceived as a Norman Rockwell fantasy, a tethered up k.d. rests her head in Cindy's corseted cleavage, while inside, the girls lock eyes in an almost-kiss. Not since Paris in the 20's has it been so trendy to be a lesbian. Closet doors have been flying off their hinges as Camile Paglia, Sandra Bernhard, and Melissa Etheridge jump on the sapphic bandwagon. But no one's coming out has been spectacular as that of pop star k.d.lang. That girl is having a good time, and VF's article by Leslie Bennetts deals realistically with her life and loves without being coy or sensationalistic. A score for butch style. Bennetts' comparision of lang's stripped down look against the tortured and teased artifice usually defined as feminine: " thick layers of makeup, waist-cinching gowns you can hardly breath in, high heels that make you mince and totter. And they call k.d.lang unnatural?" Madonna, eat your heart out!—*SR*

Gagging Miss America

No glove no love? **Leanza Cornett, Miss America '93**, may have ended up doing some inadvertent safe sex education for lesbians when a Florida school board refused to let her use the word "condom" or any other "sexually explicit language" in her AIDS-education address. Miss Cornett, whose platform is AIDS education and prevention, instead encouraged the students to always use a "glove" when engaging in sexual activity. We hope those Florida dykes took note!—*SR*



Inking in the Pink

Big advertisers are finally realizing that lesbians have financial clout. Why not let the IRS and everyone else know? In the same vein as the "Queer Money" stamps for dollar bills popularized by Queer Nation, **In the Pink** produces checks imprinted with the famous pink triangle. 10% of their proceeds go to the Whitman/Walker Clinic, a free HIV/Aids treatment center. To order, write In the Pink, PO Box 5794, Dept 921, Bethesda MD 20814.—*SR*

Cyberkink on Screen

Looking for **cybersex** in all the wrong places? Try hooking up with **PrideNet**, a gay/lesbian/bisexual community support network of over 200 BBS, including adults-only sex lines. Real Exposure, the parent company, also runs AdultNet and KinkNet... kind of like Vox by modem. To log on [illegible] *SR*

Golden Girls Hooking Up

Over 50? Looking for love? Look no further! Insulted by a lesbian matchmaking service that refused to serve her because of her age, Christine Burton founded ***Golden Threads***, a quarterly newsletter dedicated to connecting older lesbians. Born in 1905, Burton's got no age limit on her newsletter, which means the under 50 set are also welcome to join. Those over 80, however, get a free lifetime membership. Knowing how older lesbians, especially those in rural areas, can become isolated, Burton encourages her subscribers to leave Golden Threads lavender business cards in library books, bus seats, and bulletin boards. Interested? Write to *Golden Threads*, P.O. Box 60475, Northhampton, MA [illegible]—*SR*

HEATHER FINDLAY, NANCY SHEINKER AND STEPHANIE ROSENBAUM reporting

SEX IN CYBERSPACE: LOVE BYTES!

The only thing that [illegible] me [illegible] about computers back in high school was [illegible] handed [illegible] back in my computer [illegible] class. I kept pretending [illegible] documents and [illegible] her gradually [illegible] me. She would lean over me [illegible] press against her chest. Her hands would reach over [illegible] my keys to retrieve the information [illegible] wanted.

It was only when we took the final exam that my [illegible] understands computers [illegible] was over, it was obvious from my grades that [illegible] understood more than [illegible] shown to my object of ardour.

Still, I do not claim to really understand computers. I leave that to programmers. Let them write software and hardware [illegible] interested in what computers can do for me. And they do me right [illegible] and the public and private chat areas [illegible] bulletin boards do me just fine.

This cyberspace is a wonderful place for dykes to meet, talk, write and jill off under the complete anonymity of handles such as Butch Boy, [illegible] and [illegible]. You can be anybody you want for the small [illegible] membership. Some boards are even free.

The boards are totally safe [illegible] guaranteed. No one can get your phone number, your address or your real name unless you give it to them, and no information [illegible] never [illegible] I've never heard of anyone mucking up their keyboards with their body fluids, although typing with one hand and diddling yourself with the other can sometimes cause a strain on the wrists and occasionally a cramp in the lower arm.

Some evenings [illegible] these [illegible] underwear [illegible] The [illegible] friendlier [illegible] perfect [illegible] the system operator [illegible] space me.

After signing on for the [illegible] minutes [illegible] get with my free membership, I wade through the [illegible] of the latest batch of new members. I ignore the straight men, say hi to the interesting queer men, and at the [illegible] minimum introduce myself to all the new queer women.

I lost my computer maidenhead in the [illegible] zone only six months ago and I saved all the correspondence and on-line chats for posterity. It began when one of the [illegible] turned out to be a [illegible] butch top and generally kinky, so not only [illegible] me [illegible] but also [illegible] that I was a die-hard femme bottom. After several tenuous e-mail exchanges where we tested each other's desires and [illegible], we [illegible] private chat zone where we could be a little more intimate and personal. By way of a telephone line, my Macintosh spoke to her IBM and we started writing a story. I told her I had a [illegible] of public sex on a crowded [illegible] stage [illegible], and she went about fulfilling it.

[illegible] an [illegible] fantasy might go something like this. She said she [illegible] have had a voice like Mickey Mouse but through cyberspace I could hear only the voice I made in my head, so [illegible] deep and full [illegible] in the mood for fucking [illegible] and [illegible] somewhere around your [illegible] the whole [illegible]

The [illegible] however [illegible] write back [illegible] to keep me [illegible] in your [illegible] stand [illegible] my feet exactly two feet apart [illegible] feel every vibration from the [illegible] my clit and feel your breath heavy on [illegible]

On and on we write until all of a sudden [illegible] What [illegible] Please don't stop. We're not out of time [illegible]

VICTORIA STAGG ELLIOT

She signed off, leaving me with wet panties and an aching clit. I couldn't possibly wait until tomorrow, so I went into one of the public bulletin boards—the one called "Lesbian Erotic Story"—and read about other people's fantasies until my finger had done its job and my breath fogged up the computer screen.

In my mind, my mystery woman had very light blonde hair cut short, but thick—perfect for running my fingers through. Her eyes were a rich blue. Her breasts were a wonderful handful with big perky nipples. (When I finally met my mystery woman, she didn't exactly fit the picture in my head, but it was worth breaking the fantasy to meet her. That, however, is another story.)

I waited not-so-patiently until the next night. She was right on time, and we headed directly to a private chat area.

"Well, are you going to continue, or are you going to make me beg?" I asked.

"How bad do you want a top to make you scream?" she wrote, and then resumed the story, but this time in a gangway not far from an 'L' station. "The brat needs a lesson pulling my dripping hand out of her cunt," she wrote.

"My hands reach up above my head with my fingers curling through the chain link fence... I wrap myself around her with my heels digging into her ass." This time she let me come.

Like many women, I am very turned on by erotic writing. As a matter of fact, if I don't enjoy someone's writing, I don't consider having a serious relationship with them. My mystery woman took erotic literature to a new level for me and, between the two of us, I came over and over without the distractions and fumblings that usually accompany a first-time orgasm with someone new.

We continued our stories about five times a week for a couple of months. Although we still correspond a bit, I'm back to cruising the cyberspace for a hot new dyke. I'm not e-mailing willy nilly, trying to find another consummate bitch top, though. I'm cruising matchmaker profiles provided by the board.

All of the gay boards that I've ever used have some form of profiling or dating program. Some will only give you a list of every lesbian registered on the system, but quite a few give out detailed answers to essay questions. You can narrow it down to all dykes between certain ages, of certain religions, with particular drug habits, etc. You'll not only find out what their dreams are, but what turns them on, what they want to do, and whether they want to do hot e-mail.

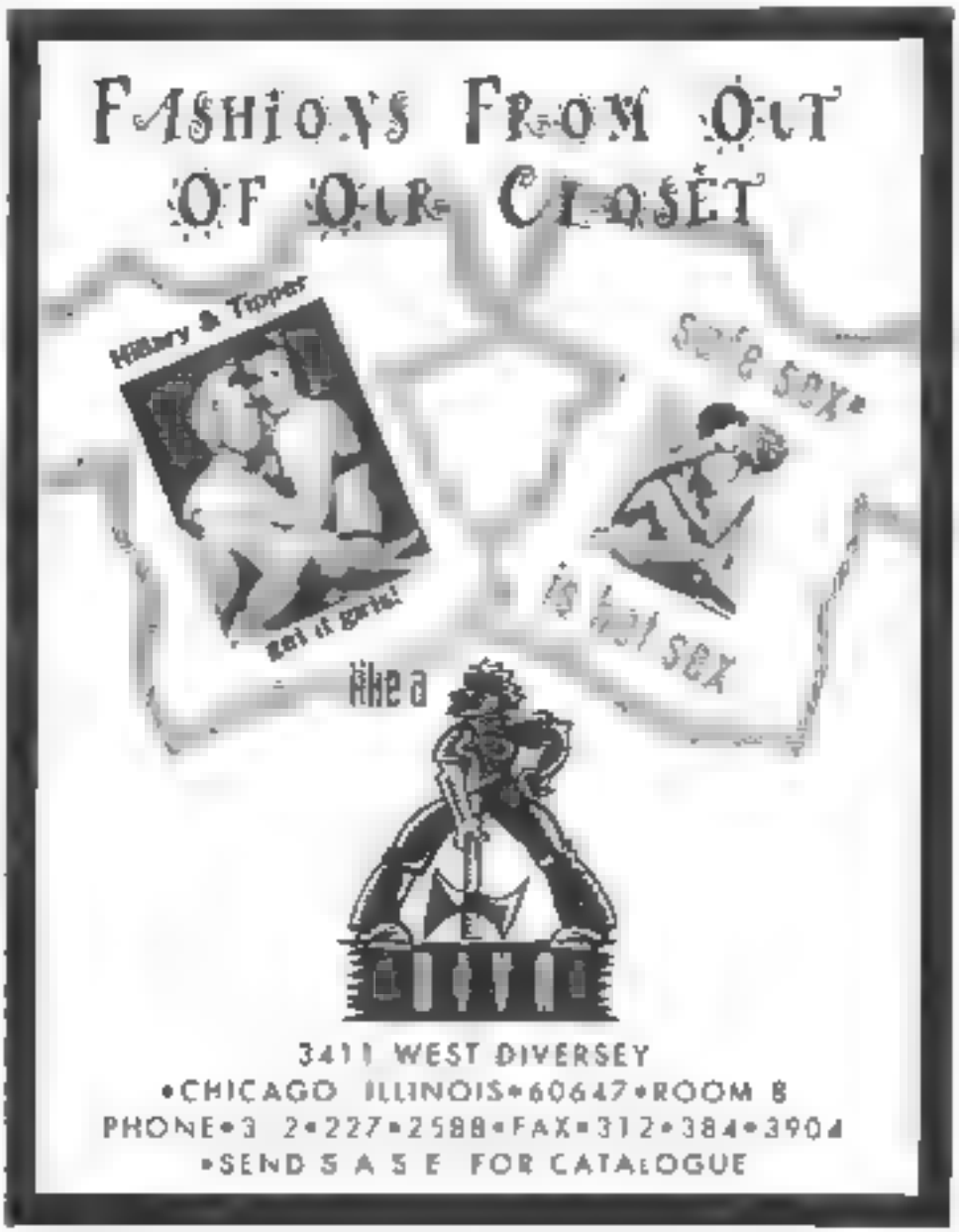
Some are only interested in having sex in person, and others only want true love. Bad choices for a casual fuck in cyberspace. It also pays to watch your manners and make sure that people want sexually explicit e-mail or chats. Complaints can be made to the SysOps, and it's always best to stay in good graces with them; they can lock you out for breaking the board's rules.

Compared to phone sex, computer sex is a bargain. Once you have the computer (or access to one), the cost of using a board can cost as little as $50. Nearly all boards allow for an average two-week free sampling period. After the free trial is over, yearly costs for a [illegible] under $40. Lambda Zone costs $35 for a basic membership, giving you 90 minutes per day.

Board numbers are usually advertised in the classified sections of gay publications, and once you get on one you can find many more in its directories. Listings can always be found in Boardwatch Magazine, the publication of computer bulletin boards. Boards do pop up and disappear rather fast, so it's always best—and a lot more fun, to sign up on several at once. The four I'm on keep me busy enough without swallowing up [illegible].

When first signing on, you may notice a very [illegible]. Oh, this is where they've been keeping all the gay Republicans I kept hearing about them, but didn't know where any lived." Well, now you know they're on computer bulletin boards. But don't let that put you off electronic dating; pomo-crazed journalist named Scooby who keeps talking about Bulgaria (my favorite country) and pushing the "Vote Democrat" ticket. [illegible] ○

IN SEX, THE HARDWARE GOES INTO THE SOFTWARE. IN COMPUTERS, IT'S VICE-VERSA



INNA VALIN

My work is not conceived immaculately.
It is born simply of the common dirt, pain and hope from which we originate;
this is then translated in to small pieces of silver gelatin covered film.
I use my body, with objects that talk, grab, scream, fuck, love, hate, cry and
contradict in the hope that people will think, feel and question themselves.

My current subject is religion.
This is a compulsory subject for me, as if my mother was a junkie
and I was a junk baby raised on twisted biblical interpretation. The dealer was the church,
doling out sanitary, deathless security in exchange for colorless behavior and non-consensual masochism.
My photos capture our liberation from the bible's patriarchal myths about women.
The myth that sexual women—Eve, Dinah, Mary Magdalen, Jezebel the Whore of Babylon—
are the root of evil has terrorized little girls into the required subservient mindset.

Women are sexual beings and use sexual imagery as one way to shatter this myth. I free a nun of her habit and allow her to masturbate; I release the Virgin Mary from her pedestal so she can rest on my Venus mound. She is waiting to fuck a woman with her whole body until she is drenched in warm, wet abandon. I try to show what the Holy Sacrament should be: a joy, given freely, cunt to tongue, tongue to cunt, mouth to nipple, nipple to mouth. Then perhaps all will be cleansed and forgiven in the shuddering of this release.

[redacted]

Mary Connor: Body with mud: the skin now allowed me to explore sensations once nine years ago. Body on sensations intensified together the mixture much more intense

WICKED SEX: LESBIANS IN MODERN WITCHCRAFT

Women gather in a forest glade to honor their divine Goddess. The trees look her use are their temples, their hands their Athame wand, their es. They cast a magic circle to keep away all danger and to ensure that what they do sacred. Then hold hands, chant together and invite the Goddess to come into their bodies. Now when they begin to touch kiss and ca one another, they will be goddesses. It is no earthly overstating it is a rite. When each woman orgasms, she will dedicate her joy pleasure to healing the earth. Her sexuality not only sacred it is powerful. Eu one in turn breathes deeply and rhythmically begins to shake and tremble a Su B takes over chant Astarte Inanna.

* * * *

witches flying broom new and pagan Montgomery enslaved women

CAROL QUEEN

moon. Midnight Sabbat gatherings complete with wine, food and sexual abandon!

Be [illegible] now vo[illegible] for many modern [illegible] feel as se [illegible] ve about [illegible] and our girlfriend might [illegible] Among [illegible] the mun [illegible] When [illegible] the history of Witchcraft [illegible] to understand its sensuality, especially [illegible] sexual matters like [illegible] has a history of violent [illegible] the hands of patriarchal culture [illegible] ...ed, silenced or ...erse [illegible] their sexuality. After all [illegible] this country's witch hunting [illegible] the sexual [illegible] witchcraft stems from carnal

Three witches and their [illegible]

[illegible] which [illegible] women [illegible]. [illegible] of women paid for this belief with their lives.

Today Witchcraft [illegible] in the public mind with Satanism, and the medieval myth that sexually voracious Witches kissed the devil's butt during their Sabbat meetings has been resituated, thanks to tabloid TV, in daycare centers. A Witch today could pay for her beliefs with her job or her kids—the same sort of fate that awaits many dykes.

But the truth is that a sizeable percentage of the many women today who practice Witchcraft—otherwise known as Wicce, Wicca or simply "the Craft"—is lesbian or bisexual, and their involvement in the Craft is deeply connected to their sexuality. In fact, many believe that because Wicce is a female centered religion that reveres a Great Goddess, it is a spiritual path tailor made for women who love women. Many believe, moreover, that because Wiccan philosophy rejects the hierarchy of spirit over body, it is tailor made for those who worship at the temple of the flesh.

Annie Sprinkle thought so when she photographed four lesbian Witches for a pictorial in *On Our Backs*. She accompanied them to a secret country location where they invoked the Goddess and performed an erotic ritual. Her models are wearing what Witches often do during their rituals—that is, they are "sky clad," garbed in nothing but jewelry and their own skin. One campy photo shows them wearing nothing but tall black hats.

The pictorial proved controversial. One Wiccan objected to it on the grounds that it misrepresented her spiritual beliefs. The pointy hats drew particular fire. I read the ensuing exchange in *On Our Backs* letter section and shook my head; I'm no stranger to feminist catfights, dyke drama, or differences of opinion within Wicce, but it seemed to me that the offended letter-writer didn't know she was speaking on behalf of a spiritual system that had no universally acknowledged policy, much less dogma, about pointy hats.

The Wiccan woman, however, was probably offended by more than the Witches' headgear. She complained that the models "Priestess needs to discuss with them the difference between a ritual and an orgy"—could it be that her objection was really to the sex?

But sometimes there is no clear difference between a ritual and an orgy. When the [illegible] piece of [illegible] dance, make music and love [illegible] for all acts of love and pleasure are My rituals," she spells out [illegible] Wiccan [illegible] honors and emphasizes sexuality [illegible]. Wicce acknowledges and celebrates sex in all its diversity, from queer to het and beyond. This [illegible] queer [illegible] keeps me—and a [illegible] queer women like me [illegible].

Although it is more common [illegible] the [illegible], some [illegible] covens [illegible] in their rituals. [illegible] the Great Rite, in which [illegible] the [illegible] the Goddess and her [illegible] the [illegible]. For the [illegible] present at this union has great spiritual significance. Can you imagine being so privileged as

> **WICCE ACKNOWLEDGES AND CELEBRATES SEX IN ALL ITS DIVERSITY, FROM QUEER TO HET AND BEYOND...**

to watch God fuck? Jehovah never struck me as a very sexy guy but, in the Wiccan context, the Great Rite tells me that sex is truly sacred. The power of the rite is perhaps enhanced by the voyeurism that is still, in our culture, a forbidden sexual possibility.

Z Budapest, the charismatic Hungarian immigrant who introduced "Dianic" or woman centered Wicce to the United States, has taken note of the heterosexism implicit in this ceremony. She has said that "the Great Rite ought to be taken up by someone who has experience working with women's sexual energy. Great enlightenment could follow." Indeed! The women in Annie Sprinkle's pictorial, in fact, may have been doing their own, specifically lesbian version of the Great Rite.

Another branch of Wicce initiates new coven members with a rite of "binding and scourging," which are activities you might see today at any S/M party—though in that environment they'd doubtless be called bondage and discipline. In some gender-mixed covens the women are very clearly on top, as befits a group which reveres the Sacred Female. I should hasten to add that in traditional covens binding and scourging would not be

SIXTEENTH CENTURY LESBIAN WITCHES?

[illegible] sixteenth century [illegible] suggests that some women who were accused of witchcraft [illegible] relationships with other women. A pamphlet describing the trial [illegible] Elizabeth [illegible] of Essex in [illegible] describes all kinds of [illegible] friends [illegible] a Sabbath [illegible] relationship [illegible] sexual relations between women [illegible] gave [illegible] William [illegible] having been [illegible] death.

Essex [illegible] the same pamphlet [illegible] a woman who accused [illegible] Kemp [illegible] the [illegible] hanged for [illegible].

[illegible] that when [illegible] on the side of the law [illegible] "Perverse [illegible] Prickers" who gained fame [illegible] suspected [illegible] the devil's mark [illegible] the spot on which [illegible] where the devil was [illegible]. Hundreds of [illegible] prickers were employed [illegible] women who was [illegible] hands all over [illegible] bodies [illegible] were [illegible] would [illegible] was [illegible] she was [illegible] death along with [illegible].

Magic Books

A Selective List of Books About Witchcraft and Wicce

Witches, Midwives and Nurses [illegible] plies that [illegible] [illegible]

The Spiral Dance [illegible] [illegible] into the living [illegible] of [illegible]

The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries [illegible] the Goddess in the Office by Z Budapest [illegible]

[illegible]/Ecology by Mary Daly [illegible]

The Witch Cult in Western Europe by Margaret Murray [illegible] proposes [illegible] pagan [illegible] was [illegible] Murray's evidence—as well as her scholarly credentials—have been severely [illegible] because she was a woman [illegible]

Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture by Arthur Evans [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] memories [illegible]

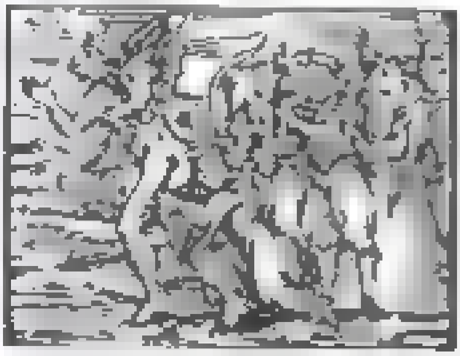
When God Was A Woman by Merlin Stone [illegible] how they were replaced by [illegible] religions.

The Malleus Maleficarum The [illegible] and [illegible] hunting manual is now available in a Dover paperback [illegible] endless [illegible] of medieval [illegible] misogyny.

[illegible]

thought of as sexual activities but as integral parts of an initiation ritual. In binding and scourging, initiates are bound to the Goddess and rid of their impurities via a (probably mild) whipping. Nevertheless, one wonders [illegible]

If Wiccan rituals have always been sexy, some sex parties have recently become very witchy. For several years I have been hosting safe sex parties for people of all genders and sexual orientations. Feeling that it was my tendency to seek spiritual sexuality in these spaces—what more vivid way to bring home that "all acts of love and pleasure are My rituals" than to surround myself with a polymorphous Bacchanal—I began to hold gatherings where the confluence of sex and spirit could be openly acknowledged. I called them



[illegible]

Queen of Heaven Pagan Parties after one of the ancient names for the Goddess. We open these parties with a group ritual borrowing heavily from Wiccan themes, and close them with "Honor the Goddess with your pleasure!" As Wiccans and pagans come together with likeminded others, the entire gathering becomes a large, pulsating Magic Circle, delineating a sacred and protected space. The sex play that follows is dedicated to the Goddess and is touched, in my opinion, by a particular [illegible]

At my Queen of Heaven parties, part of what is so exciting is being present in a room where lots of people are being sexual. The voyeurism is also a powerful charge. I can watch women meeting and coupling with women. I can also watch men with men, women with men, and groups of bodies in which each person's gender no longer seems to matter. The sounds and cries of people fucking in countless ways combine like a chant. In a way everyone in the room is having sex with everyone else. The old idea that spiritual union can only happen with one's mate breaks down, and each participant can enjoy sex without the necessity of a relationship. Yet the sex isn't exactly casual, either, because my gatherings are solemn rituals. Each woman—and each man—present is a goddess, for the Witches' doctrine of divine immanence holds that the earth and everything on it is the Goddess.

That's what it looks like to me, anyway. The more gender-bent and polymorphous the better, for to me ecstatic sexuality doesn't deal in limits.

The Herstory of Wicce

[illegible]

[illegible] important [illegible] me. Over the years I have learned that Wicce is actually a religion, older than Christianity, which principally reveres not a [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] peoples before the Romans imported Christianity and forced it upon them. During the medieval and renaissance periods, the Old Religion was all but stamped out in four hundred years of a violent holy war in which millions of people—a vast majority of them [illegible]

The Church's reasoning behind the extermination of Witches relied heavily on notions of heresy and sexuality. Witches were said to steal husbands, render men impotent, and engage in sexual activity with the devil as well as each other. In England, Witches were invariably accused of consorting with small animals such as cats or ferrets, which the [illegible] called "familiars" and carried [illegible] suckle her familiars, often in her "privy parts."

According to Arthur Evans' *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture*, the essence of the conflict between the Church and the Witches was sexual. Evans claims that the Church was infuriated by the Old Religion's tolerance toward homosexuality. Catholicism transformed the Horned God of the Witches into the devil, and invented Satanism to disguise the fact that it was trying to stamp out a dissenting religion. For historians of Wicce, Witches are not, and never were, Satanists. Devil worship is Christianity's own twisted [illegible]

Some feminist historians contend that Witches were the healers or "wise women" who provided their neighbors with basic health care, including obstetrics, gynecology and abortions. According to this theory, the

[illegible]

It's 6:00 a.m. My prostate is resilient. I have a hard rock up it once more. I'm on the set as an extra for the sex club scene in Safe is Desire. Fatale's new safe sex video, and I'm with Darbi Michael, the Star, get her all powdered by a make up artist.

Hunting all around me in this unearthly hour is the all women crew and cast. Gorgeous babes in outrageous costumes for more to do, interminate with the mundanes of gear, food carts, talking muscles and hearing growls of the production crew. How we wished we'd brought our cameras around and made a porn flick about them.

Waiting on the extras is a big bore hard work, not much play. The worst was having to sit still at my post under hot lights while someone inside a condom ran. But not many typical days at the office involve watching the safe sex films have a threesome - fusion. We extras were hurtin' by the time that part of the shoot was over, and some of us retreated to the back rooms for some oh, sexual healing. It was only noon by then, and the orgy scene was still to come. —Kat I. Sin

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHYLLIS CHRISTOPHER

BACKSTAGE PEEK

FATALE VIDEO'S
Safe Is Desire

Director of Cinematography Fawn Yacker and Director Jeb Rosebrook check out a shot

above: Key [illegible] Harper cooks [illegible] Marcus Kennedy and [illegible] Pat Sichka [illegible] Judge Sandra [illegible]

below: [illegible] Anne Jones and [illegible] Jessie Ward and Janet [illegible] take five before the performance [illegible] half of the group [illegible] Make-a-Circus! Studio Rosengarten [illegible] Darla Michaels at [illegible]

...ie's roommates. Frances muggles cum condoms, unsuspected gay porn star Bill Marcus. The first male vagal unveiled in On Our ...ith. A December 2007 vu when va snap that raised ... safe sex issues party town with lube and latex ... Stevens who later gets ...ans Michael as Dionne Davis ... the set ... below. The group sex scene of full nude

THE ARRIVAL

Dearest Susannah:

It's been only 12 days since I saw you last, but 12 days without your touch was like an eternity. My imagination has been working relentlessly to find an erotic reverie [illegible] my libido until I see you again. After enduring many lukewarm masturbation fantasies I think we finally come up with a sizzling scenario that will keep us both hot and wet for days to come. Okay Susannah, here's the scene:

You're flying down on the next plane—I've arranged to meet you at the airport, 2 noon exactly. You step off the plane dressed in black jeans, a turtleneck and your boots polished to a dangerous gleam. I am there waiting for you, standing a distance from the passive curiosity of the airline personnel. I've am dressed all in black: my dress is cut low, and the seams of my stockings that begin where my high heels end are visible nearly all the way up to my ass. I wear a black felt hat with feathers to match, and a veil to conceal the seductive expression on my face.

Our eyes meet, accompanied by two smiles and two pounding hearts. I remain still as you approach. No smiles now, only a mutual look that sears the soul—and the cunt. I reach for you, but the glint in your eyes stops my motion in mid-air; my hands drop to my sides where they belong. I have forgotten my place in these past 12 days.

(Continued on page 42)

I want it, but it seems downright nasty to get buttfucked in such a public place

WREN MARSHALL

Hail Mariah

F[illegible] been playing a waiting game. I've watched her. When she didn't think I was looking, she stared back. I stand five feet ten and weigh 170. I like to think of myself as a bold Viking warrior. Actually, I'm a truck driver. That's not a terribly heroic profession, but a lot of women, when they hear what I do, get turned on.

Not Mariah. In fact, her response to this information was decidedly scornful. She speculates in stocks.

Mariah manages the estate of a wealthy old man in Marin County, California. This strikes me as genteel in keeping with the fact that she was born to a wealthy family herself, in Andorra. Andorra is a micro-country in the Pyrenees Mountains. It's between Spain and France, and she speaks both those languages fluently as well as Italian, and, of course, English.

What I am, in other words, is outclassed by her.

But not distracted. She watched me as I [illegible] her to [illegible] and [illegible] friends. All the while I knew she was [illegible] almost [illegible] to see her [illegible] old [illegible] in our [illegible] and [illegible] as she always wears [illegible] fastened in [illegible] her [illegible] [illegible] insatiable she is.

Apparently there [illegible] able to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] all [illegible] [illegible] all [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

SUCKED OFF BY A VAMPIRE

SAFE IS DESIRE

Director Debi Sundahl
Fatale Video

The well lubricated girdle made of plastic wrap (a must for every dyke's sex repertoire) is my favorite part of Fatale's new video *Safe is Desire*. Written and directed by Debi Sundahl and produced by Nan Kinney, *Safe is Desire* stars the lovely, eminently fuckable Christina Larena as "Allie" an urbanite AIDS education worker, and the near-fire hazard Darby Michael as "Dione," a back-to-nature-type [illegible] It will also jump-start your girlie-engines.

There have been other lesbian safe sex videos, first there was the explicit but all-too-short *Current Flow*, featuring "Shara" poking Annie Sprinkle with gloved hands and sucking her through a dental dam to the tune of Sinead O'Connor's "Just Like You'd Know It Would Be." Canadians Debbie Douglas and Gabrielle Micallef deserve kudos for directing the first full-fledged narrative about lesbians and HIV that same year, *AnOther Love Story: Women and AIDS*. This video, which (like *Safe is Desire* and *Current Flow*) features a black/white couple and dramatizes their disbelief and anxiety following a doctor's suggestion that one of the women be tested for HIV (Douglas and Micallef forgot to show us any sex, but after all that was only 1990). In '99 Germany's S.A.F.E. came out with their uneven but honest *Truth or Dare*, a campy video with great doctor get-ups and lots of latex fisting. Last year the British Unconscious Collective brought us *Wet Sexy Women* (still "a work in progress" according to director Lulu Belliveau) which showcases an arousing array of latex use, squirt gun fights and period piece sex interspersed throughout a somewhat tedious banquet-table discussion about women's health. Finally, Heidi Deming (who also directed the three minute gem "Jill goes Off") protested the exclusion of lesbian work from San Francisco AIDS Foundation's safe sex video contest by submitting her drag king short *Girls Will Be Boys*.

But the latest, hottest and most coherent lesbian safe sex tape to date is *Safe is Desire*. It will also be a boon to lesbian safer sex educators. For example, after the opening [illegible] of a dental dam, Dione walks out offering to lock the door. Allie's response is staggering and insightful, full of drama and truth: "That's fine, but right now, my safety isn't being threatened by a stranger." These are the words that lesbians have to believe in order consistently and passionately to practice safer sex. We have been told over and over that just by being lesbians we are immune to HIV. In my AIDS education work, I've even heard lesbians talk about HIV prevention as "only sharing needles with other lesbians." I tell them that desire is safe. Fucking without latex and sharing needles with anyone, lesbian or [illegible]

Back to *Safe is Desire*. Attempting to make up after their safe sex spat, our adorable couple ventures out to see the peer education "Safe Sex Sluts" do their do at a sex club in San Francisco. Here's where you'll catch that first glimpse of the plastic wrap creation the sluts wrap the stuff between their legs, around their waists, do the nasty and then pull it off so they can recycle it into wrist restraints. After the sluts demo, Dione and Allie go upstairs to watch an orgy complete with tattoos, piercings, slapping, strapping, spikes and studs. In *Safe is Desire*, there's something for everyone: if the viewer can't identify with the S/M fantasy, she can identify with Dione and Allie, who don't partake but do stick around and watch.

We even get some lesbian faggotry when one butch leans over to suck another butch's dick. Dyke-fag rapport, in fact, is a repeated theme: in the beginning, when Dione and Allie are making out on their way to the bedroom, Allie's fag housemate comes running out of his room pleading for a condom. We see his trick—and his tricks hard-on—in the background. "How could you get caught without one?" Allie chastises as she reaches into her purse. Although Dione makes a face this time, by the end of the video she is happily accepting a little latex wonder from this same housemate as he passes them in Allie's hallway. In the final scene, the camera takes us to the bedroom where our heroines—turned on by the lust in latex they just witnessed—overcome their safer sex hang up with this [illegible]

Fatale is to be applauded for making a video that combines education, sizzle and—a first for lesbian-made porn videos—graphic examples of the overlap between lesbian sexual culture and that of gay men. On top of all this, Deborah Pardes's original soundtrack is full of emotional rapture. *Safe is Desire* proves what I tell the health educators in my HIV media workshops: we believe what we see, not what we hear. Just do it. Desire is safe. Be [illegible]

-Catherine Saalfield

ARRESTING IMAGES: IMPOLITIC ART AND UNCIVIL ACTIONS

Steven C. Dubin
Routledge

For Steven C. Dubin, author of *Arresting Images: Impolitic Art and Uncivil Actions*, no art is intrinsically [illegible] for the Arts, Dubin attempts to provide an impartial overview of the complexity of national funding. According to Dubin, the conflict between the NEA and "minority artists is compounded by the fractured identity of the NEA itself whose board is split [illegible] his impartiality may be a laudable quality in a journalist, but it is impossible to presume any equity between the government and these artists. Where is David Wojnarowicz now?

Arresting Images may provide the resources—but not the passion—that we need to fight censorship in the future.

—Holly Wills

K.D. LANG: CARRYING THE TORCH

William Robertson
Toronto: ECW Press, 1993

Hey k.d. lang! Are you looking for those details about lang's life that you just can't get enough of? The book you've been waiting for is here. Read about the time Kathy Dawn got her braces caught in a volleyball net after a spike. Nod knowingly at the girls' basketball team picture which proves what we all suspected: k.d. has always been a girljock. Biographer William Robertson has saved fans a lot of homework by compiling in one source concert reviews, interviews, cliques by other artists (including Ann Magnuson) and, of course, gossip.

But for those of you who want to know more about how this jazz-cum-country singer will reinvent herself as a dyke dreamboy—especially after her *Vanity Fair* fling with Cindy Crawford—Robertson's biography gives only a hint. More disappointingly, what this biography lacks is lang's own voice. I was left wondering if Robertson had any contact with lang directly, since he never quotes her to support his interpretations of her rise to stardom or her reputation as a sexual changeling.

"Torch" is defined as "a sentimental song of unrequited love, as in carrying the torch for someone." Robertson certainly carries a biographer's torch for his subject; there's no evidence, though, that his relationship with k.d. is mutual. Those of you who want more than a good background study will have to do what Robertson must: wait for her autobiography.

Mimi=Freez

BRAT ATTACK

Edited by Fish
San Francisco, CA 94140

I was first Brat-attacked at the zine section of San Francisco's lesbian and gay bookstore by the mean-assed leather woman on the cover. Clothespin hanging off her tit, she pointed at me and commanded me to "Buy it!" I obeyed. But now bad girls and their admirers will no longer have to hunt down Brat Attack in specialty bookstores. Equipped with a new printed format, this "do it yourself S/M" zine for leatherdykes will make itself palatable to retailers and—more [illegible] wherever they may roam.

Brat Attack may no longer be xeroxed and hand-collated but, if the prose-poem in the latest issue "Why I Play With My Cunt" (in which author coyechild explains "because whores became expensive") is at all indicative, the magazine will remain defiantly in-your-face. The drawings by editor Fish and Terry Sapp are the bread and butter of the magazine; they are the perfect (and well-executed) vehicle for S/M's penchant for fantasy, danger and play. Contributions from S/M luminaries like Pat Califia round out this delicious subcultural repast.

If I could terrify and arouse you as much as that leatherdyke on the cover of my first Brat Attack did me, I'd order you to buy it. To get *Brat Attack* put pressure on your local bookseller or send twelve bucks to Brat Attack, P.O. Box 40745, San Francisco, CA 94140-0754 (cash or money order only).

Heather Findlay

Safe Is Desire

ACTIVISM, CREATIVITY, VICTORY IN PERSON
Video screening and discussion

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

SEPT 24 Santa Barbara, CA
Santa Barbara [illegible]
[illegible] Resource Center
[illegible]

SEPT 25 Los Angeles
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Blvd., West Hollywood
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[illegible]

NORTHEAST USA

OCT 7 New York
[illegible]
Community Services Center
[illegible]
[illegible]

OCT 8 New Brunswick, NJ
[illegible]
RNC, College Ave. Campus,
Rutgers Univ.

OCT 9 Boston
Emerson College
Faces From the Margin
[illegible]

OCT 12 New York
ASTRAEA and Gay Men's
Health Crisis
[illegible] (ASTRAEA)
or [illegible] (GMHC)

OCT 14 Boston
The Fenway Community Health Center
[illegible]

OCT 15 Philadelphia
Female Trouble and Dyke
Action Pride
[illegible]

OCT 16 Washington, DC
Reel Affirmations
[illegible]
Film Festival
[illegible]

SAN FRANCISCO

OCT 21 San Francisco
The Roxie Cinema
[illegible]

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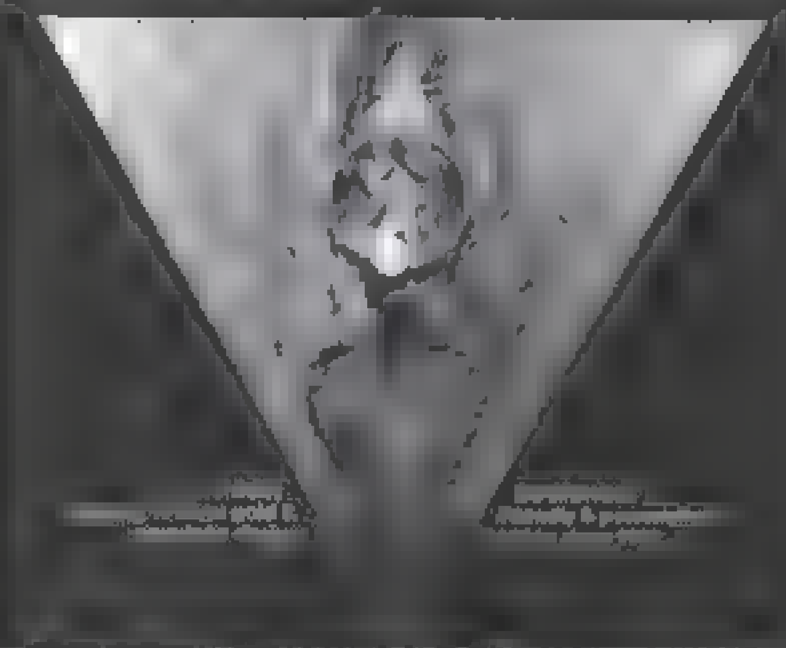
An erotic spanking drama

[illegible] **Hard Discipline** [illegible] **Hard Discipline** [illegible] **Stand Corrected** [illegible]

RAELYN GALLINA



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[illegible] which burn [illegible] the rise of our modern male-dominated medical profession. Others [illegible] women who were [illegible] midwives [illegible] even when [illegible] were not practicing [illegible] as well as spiritually powerful.

[illegible] queer brothers [illegible] have spiritual [illegible] the term "faggot," an archaic word meaning a bundle of sticks, is a grim reminder that the fates of marginalized people are often linked. It is said that gay men were sometimes [illegible] and burned along with [illegible] were [illegible] enough [illegible] an image of [illegible]

Sex and Wiccan Philosophy

[illegible] the medical [illegible] Witches [illegible] Satan [illegible] Goddess [illegible] women [illegible] theology, it might [illegible] there are alternatives [illegible] the Goddess [illegible] in the world [illegible]

[illegible] sexual [illegible] Wicca's greatest difference [illegible] religion [illegible] with [illegible] one of the [illegible] greatest [illegible] for Wiccans, especially queer ones, who have grown up under the influence of sex-negative and homophobic

Christian values. After all, the same system that gave us the crusades and the witch burnings is responsible for our country's and our society's deeply ingrained misogyny. This means that even if we grew up in a loving Christian home, we've been deeply influenced by the church's definition of acceptable sexuality—sex for the sexual pleasure can only be the shadowy lust in the wife and only a perverse system that nonprocreative sexuality could ever have been acceptable to God.

As human beings, we are flawed and fragile if we are all creatures of habit and especially if we're cultural whores of puritanical Christianity, we should be a damn sight more wary of sexual sexuality free women and gay men and women. Jesus's actions—eating with lepers and tax collectors and helping drunks and whores—were all perfect examples of how we should treat those who were supplicants to society for sexual favors or the outcasts.

In the Christian Wiccan pantheon, sex and the body are sacred. Goddess worship is the ever-popular inspired magic in the new generation of Wicca tells me that our capacity for pleasure and sharing pleasure is a deeper part of how we access the sacredness of our morality is very different from that of fundamentalist religious traditions. Our morality emphasizes being responsible and taking care of each other or at the very least not hurting with sex and always care of our own and other boundaries. Always are things we do when we are in the

Saying sex is sacred doesn't mean anything goes. Unlike Christianity, in Wicca sex is a participatory exercise. Play teaches that to use energy, you must move around it, and you need a ground to some act. The energy needs to be moving and the right touches that sexual actually about an exchange of energy. You can have an erotic exchange with a tree or a rock or a flower.

Sometimes I imagine that in Wicca erotic energy can be exchanged with the earth and with the gods. Through the years, the ones the gods are and with humans in non-human partners. I've had sex with the ocean and have experienced erotic desire for animals. We've had sex with the ocean and have wound into a warm southern breeze. I've experienced making love to the purple hills holding me in accordance and surrendering to the energy of the mountains. I've also had orgasms through wealth and the arts.

Christians might jump all over people who are uncomfortable with their sexuality. When sexual energy may become so intense not to want to end. Sex and the energy is primordial with a field of flowers, and we can be satisfied by breathing and eye contact with nature when we use to avoid [illegible] fingers, dancing, and orgasms. And by saying that the Christian is not a place for nature, Starhawk is not on our prejudices about free sexual expression.

Perhaps our house dream is Wicca are [illegible]

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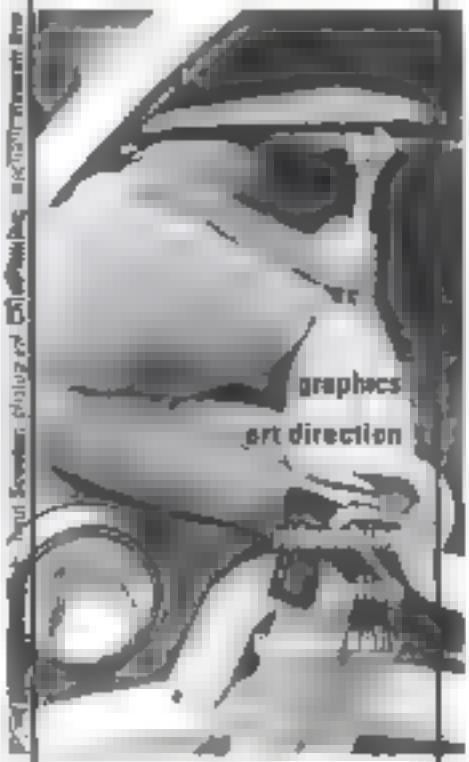
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art direction
look neater
feel better
go faster

play martyr won't make it that easy on you

My hand slides under her skirt which so e my wrist like the hood of an old-fashioned camera. My free hand is buried in the tangle of her hair when I realize all at once that can't get at her. At her. What is she I ask myself silently

that

and

before She has that smooth light Mediterranean women have its color and gloss like a pecan shell. Her black hair spills over her shoulders and her gleaming teeth grip her lower lip. There's nothing soft about this one

"Well, Alex. Her voice is hushed. What are you waiting for?"

In a flash the reverence is gone, replaced with lust. reach for her

Her thighs jerk together. Squeezing her eyes shut, she shoves her head to one side then lets

"What the fuck is it with you?" I explode. "What are you some goddamned nun in train ing?"

press it—get some work done instead. It took me all my youth and most of my 20s to beat that one

Catholicism is a different animal at the heart maybe that's why have such a fondness for olive-eyed Latin types like the one writhing under me now. Spanish Italian South American they all make my knees go weak and they fill my blue eyes with tears of adoration. Catholicism says You'll do it. You must try to resist, but you're weak and you'll do it, and then you're going to enjoy it. Confess and submit is the ritual of atonement. Now that's hot stuff.

"Re ation matter

and fresh and warm

The bones under her ar e

After a second's hesitation, she does feel her sigh, and her hips rise ever so subtly under

Good girl"

I kiss her mouth. Again, the tiny wart, and then her lips open. Cautious. And she's feeling everything, the surface of her skin alive with a fine prickling electricity that communicates itself to my fingertips. She nipples under me and a breath pours out of her in a sigh.

My hands travel down the length of her everywhere touch reacts. She's panting already and ve scarcely touched her. marvel inwardly what a fight she gave. Maybe it was worth protecting after all, this exquisite sensitivity and the bashfulness of a girl on Confirmation day.

slide my hands under her slip. She stiffens, but doesn't draw back then begins to moan. Almost inaudibly involuntarily. Yet, she hasn't really given in, and my blood quickens with the challenge of it.

Perhaps this too is a part of her game. But what she doesn't realize is that even this, what she's giving me now is better than expected,

My hands fit perfectly over her breasts. They're smooth and heavy. Her full nipples rise in the cupped heat of my palms. Her spirit and temperament may be virginal, but her body isn't.

lashes at the white pillow arouses a violence in me but also the opposite, something

The violence wins. My jaw begins to clench as the coiled force in my muscles build. I struggle to keep m touch gentle as my teeth graze the and grip her ass, and know this is a battle I've lost. The hunger has been in me too long.

She writhes underneath me, her thighs grilled together. Her pointed heels strike the mattress. She pummels my chest with her fists yet again I sense she doesn't mean it.

catch her wrists neatly and pin them over her head. "You can't say it, can you! Not even to yourself. You can't admit that you want this as much as do." I lean down into her face. The "It's fine ake it from you but the minute that word 'yes' crosses

"Stop," she says through gritted teeth.

"Oh no," I breathe. "Every little girl is taught to say 'stop.' It's the word 'yes' that women have been choking on for centuries."

always between her clamped thighs.

"Come on, Mariah. Tell me. How much do

"Fuck you."

grip one of her inner thighs feeling the sweat and heat. "Don't you see? We're never going to own our destiny if we don't own our desire. It's who we are, babe."

She shudders all over then looks as though she might shove me off her after all.

whispers.

reach down and haul them apart.

'God, Mariah," I groan.

My fingers drive into her silky moisture, and the hot walls of her cunt fold around my knuckles. Her muscles tingling my skin. I can feel her entire quivering self all beckoning me deeper. I follow. God knows I have no choice.

She arches back. Her eyes roll up to roll the taut and her thighs stretch wide apart. I watch her hands reach down to grasp the damp bend of her knees, and a jolt races through me. She holds herself like this, lifting up to meet my thrusts.

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph..." I gasp under my breath.

Liquid gushes out of her, filling my cupped palm and sliding down my wrist. My breath stops. I pump harder, hitting the same spot, demanding more. She gives. Again. Again. My thumb finds her clit. Massaging it slowly, she tenses, her thighs fold inward around my hand.

"Too hard?" I ask her. Her response is to fling her bent arm across her eyes.

So I warm her closer. She keeps her face covered, but when I get it right she parts her legs again, shyly.

I smile down at her. What she's told me to do without words, I do. She swells under my thumb. I can see her pink nipple nestled in her dark hair.

"Come on, sweetheart," I hiss, "give it to me."

I move my fingers more urgently and she responds. Shoulders, ass, everything, rising off the bed and falling again—I'm swooning. The shine of her ruby labia, opening to my hand, dazzles me. I push my whole fist into her and she shrieks.

"Yes. Alex, yes, oh God, please don't stop," she's pleading. "Please don't stop now."

"I've got you, sweetheart," I cradle the moist bank of her neck while my fist continues to drive into her.

Suddenly she clamps down. My fingers are squeezed to powder. God, she's ferocious, and I'm almost laughing. Come on, Baby. Do it.

She does, in a final hot gush of fluid. I collapse against her raised knees, exhausted and jubilant.

There's a stretch of time I can't account for. Each of us floats off alone. I'm dimly aware of her warm sex and I are back under my cheek, my breathing returns to normal. We billow gently back down to earth together.

Finally, without either of us having moved, I sense she's opened her eyes. I open my own to find her gaze full on me. Soft now and I smile at her. She drops her gaze shyly.

"I saw it, Alex."

Her voice is almost inaudible.

"Yeah, you did. It wasn't so bad, was it?" I ask. "So what now, eh? You're gonna spend all day tomorrow saying Hail Marys and Our Fathers, or whatever it is you fallen women say?"

She laughs. I realize then that I've never heard a real laugh from her. "You might have to give me more to repent for," she says. "If I'm going to go through all that."

"Baby," I tell her, "say the word and I will stain your soul beyond retrieve."

She laughs again, but covers her eyes with her hands. Lustful woman—and my fist still in her. I feel a poem coming on. ●

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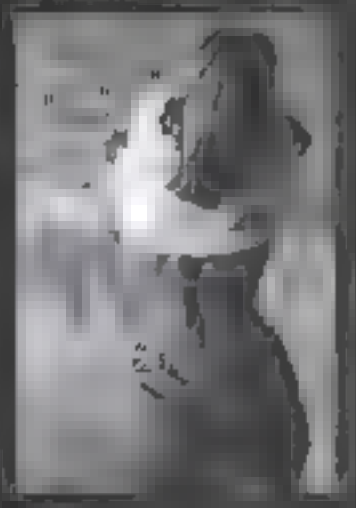

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THE ARRIVAL from page 39

afraid to move and provoke your anger any more [illegible] ing for your touch. At last [illegible] feel your hands on my shoulders.

"Turn around."

I'm grateful for the chance to move, my body is stiff and cold from leaning against the stall.

"Bend over."

Oh no! You're not going to spank me here in a restroom at the airport. Suddenly I realize it isn't spanking you're preparing me for.

"Oh Susannah, not my ass, not here, please, no."

I want it, but it seems downright nasty to get butt-fucked in such a public place. I still consider myself to be a good Catholic dyke.

"Please Susannah, be good to me."

"I am being good [illegible] giving you just what you need. Be a good girl and take it quiet. Or would you rather [illegible]"

I'm silent. [illegible] can't believe you are really doing this. You slip the dildo into my wet cunt and [illegible] sigh in relief and pleasure.

"Oh good, she's changed her mind," [illegible] think.

In a flash you are out and pushing the slippery silicone cock into my most tender muscle. Your hands grab my waist, pulling me onto you. Oh god it hurts, but it's so good; now [illegible] don't want you to stop, ever.

"You see honey, [illegible] know what you need, you like it, don't you! C'mon, take it all in. Ride, girl friend, ride."

[illegible] heave my body back to meet your thrust. The dildo is buried in my ass, the tip of [illegible] ing against my belly. The tension builds as you trigger the secret, sensitive places inside my hole, and I work hard for the release just out of reach. Together we move, no words, just breathing, until [illegible] feel the sweet beginnings of prickly heat spreading from my ass to my cunt, flooding me with waves of ecstatic sensation. I'm climbing higher and higher, pushing through the levels, reaching [illegible] into myself, into you, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] touch me.

"What a good girl you are," you murmur.

[illegible] can't even respond; [illegible] lay in your arms like [illegible] incredible orgasm. After awhile [illegible] come back to [illegible]

"Thank you, Susannah. You were right. You [illegible]"

[illegible] game [illegible]

[illegible] our car.

[illegible] hand [illegible] soon mean. ⊙

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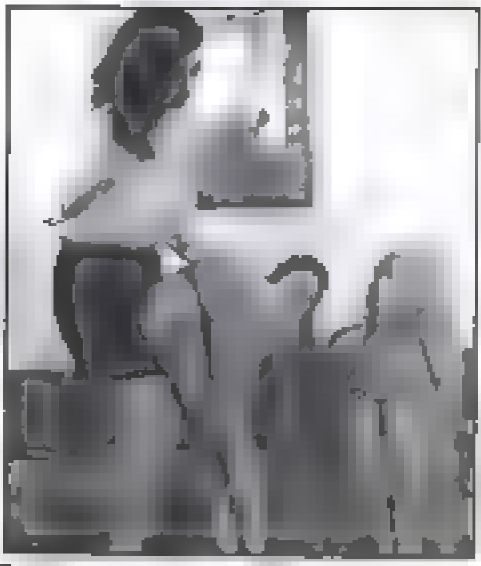

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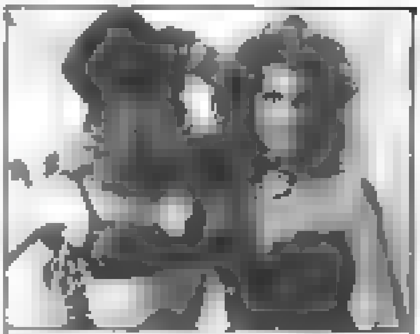

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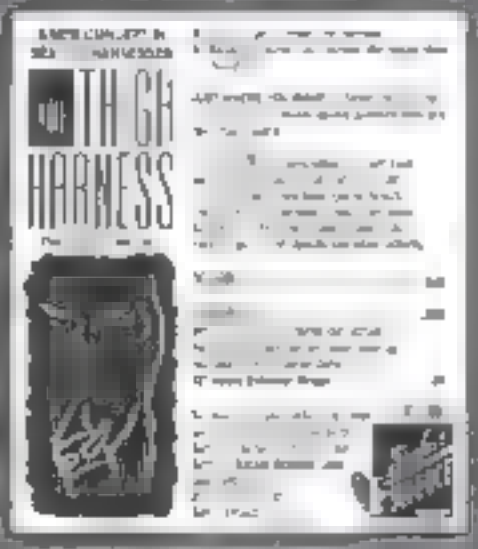

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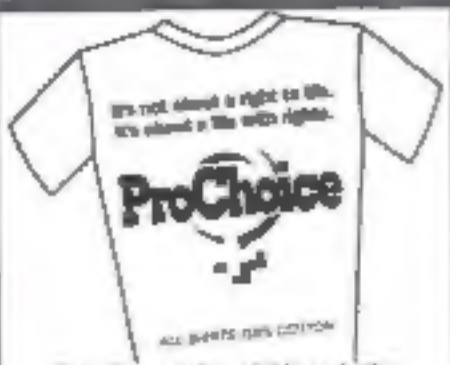

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(continued from page 39)

rarely driven by a fear of sex, and it's more likely that the animist sexual world view will open people's erotic potential more than limit it. What's wrong with seeing the Goddess in your Hitachi? In my Wiccan erotic experiences, I am as likely to have an orgasm as I would be with a human lover, enjoying body stimulation. Saying the Craft is not a place to cruise, moreover, is true only if cruising is seen as an activity without sexual and spiritual balance.

Indeed, too often cruising is devoid of any spiritual exchange, and someone who thinks that because Witches revere sex they are bound to want to have sex with anyone will quickly have her bubble burst. "Anything goes" has a natural delimiter within Wicca: the boundary that Starhawk talks about is, in its simplest sense, consensuality. An important Craft principle, a sort of Witch's golden rule is, "as long as you harm no one, do as you will."

Still, the Wiccan connection between sex and spirituality has its articulate critics. Pat Califia, for example, has argued that some use pagan spirituality to excuse the sex, particularly in the case of S/M. "It's exciting," she writes, "to live in a time when monotheistic, male-dominated religions are being challenged and people are seeking guidance from the natural world and its Creatrix. Sex is a powerful force, and I think it's healthy for people to counter the prudery of the Jehovah cults by incorporating pleasure into their rituals. But shame is very hard to eliminate. I sometimes see it cropping up when spirituality is used to rationalize or excuse S/M. Sex does not need to be justified... Some of the latex shamans are using occult jargon to sanitize S/M and make it sound like something more refined than a complex and unusual way to get off."

Dykes in Today's Witch Cults

Because of their belief that male and female energies are required in equal measure to perform ritual magic, some branches of Wicca, particularly those in Britain described by T.M. Luhrmann in her book *Persuasions of the Witches' Craft*, mandate gender balance in covens. Some of these groups are downright homophobic and go so far as to exclude homosexuals from their organizations. Others, because of the strict polarity of their boy-girl, boy-girl emphasis, simply leave no comfortable space for gay and lesbian adherents.

As present-day Wicca developed, however, feminist and queer offshoots began to form, leaving their stamp on the Craft's world view. Rowan Fairgrove, a lesbian witch, remembers when she discovered lesbian-feminist Wicca at a festival in the early seventies. In those days, male-female polarity was the rule. But Fairgrove recalls that one Wiccan journal, *The Rowan Tree*, included a gay supplement called *The Other Pages*. This section of the journal emphasized that followers should think about Wiccan ritual in a new, non-heterosexist way. Fairgrove explains that the gist of *The Other Pages* was that "you can get into magical space without being opposites." Moreover, to make magic one need not reduce all polarities to male vs. female. As Fairgrove puts it: "*The Other Pages* encouraged people to think in terms like, 'How does the ocean feel moving against the beach? How does the beach feel with the waves lapping at it, teasing?'"

This attempt to revamp the erotically charged, but potentially exclusive male-female polarity may sound familiar to anyone who has read Joan Nestle's defense of butch-femme in lesbian relationships. In fact, today's gender bending dyke community might easily develop a new ritual by honoring the randy Horned God energy in the butch, and the

Witches and the Horned God

nurturing—but still desirous—Goddess energy in the femme. Those lesbians who don't identify with butch-femme can do away with gender polarities altogether.

In any case, dyke involvement in Wicca has increased steadily. Starhawk estimates that new lesbians comprise about the same proportion of the Craft as they do society at large, and that (again, as in the larger society) many Witches are bisexual. My guess is that the percentage is even higher. As for the racial make-up of Wicca, most Witches are Anglo-European, though there are equally vital spiritual systems based on Afro-Haitian, Brazilian, Native American and other indigenous traditions. These systems fit more or less comfortably under the Pagan umbrella and attract primarily—though not exclusively—people of color.

Fairgrove stresses that this shift toward the celebration of sexual diversity was just waiting to happen, and that it is a natural progression of the philosophy already held by Wiccans. "The Goddess says, 'All acts of love and pleasure are My rituals.' There is no negative view of sexuality and the body in Wicca. The presence of Dianics doesn't seem to be a problem nationally except in a few very conservative pockets."

Z Budapest, however, maintains that queer witches have struck more than a few disharmonious chords. "I reestablished the Dianics," she reports, "a very ancient tradition, and the hets were very upset about it. They were threatened." An out lesbian, Z Budapest calls her Dianic blend "Wimmin's religion," and hails Wicca as empowering to women, both socially and sexually. I saw her Goddess slideshow fifteen years ago and remember one thing above all: she showed us a picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe and advised us to squint at it. "See," she said, "see how she looks like a cunt! There, her head is the clit, her robes are the labia, and the rays all around her are the hair!" Singlehandedly, Z released the Catholic Goddess of all the anti-sex baggage she had been made to bear.

Many Witches are attracted to the Craft for both spiritual and sexual reasons. But there is another draw to Wicca: magic. Referring to the etymological roots of Wicca, which meant "to bend," Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon* defines a Witch as "a woman (or man) skilled in the craft of shaping, bending, and changing reality." Witches might use magic to acquire wealth or a lover, but the object of witchcraft is just as likely be to healing the earth, fighting homophobia or bringing an end to patriarchy. Z Budapest, in fact, claims credit for the arrest of a serial killer who was preying on women in the Oakland, CA hillsides. If you learn Witchcraft a la Z, you will have the satisfaction of being a magical agent for feminism.

Magic and politics aside, perhaps nothing means more to lesbian witches than their in the Craft, spirituality can be explored and honored without sacrificing their sexuality in a religious philosophy where feminine desire can birth the world, lesbian desire can be very sacred indeed. In the words of Z Budapest, "sexuality is a spiritual path by itself. It is the same place, where our sexuality and spirituality live."

Take a Goddess to Bed Tonight

Perhaps you are not a Wiccan at heart, and perhaps you don't want to mess with magic potions. What does Wicca have to offer you, then, and can you take it to bed with you?

My Wiccan sex tip is simple. Try taking the Witches' belief that we are all connected to the divine. You can, if you wish, burn some incense. (If you have access to a pagan shop, ask for the proprietor's suggestion for a scent to enhance lovemaking.) Light some candles, imagine a circle around your bed (or wherever you're doing it). Then, when you reach for lover, tell yourself that you are touching a goddess. She is Goddess, and you are Goddess, and all of your sexual desires are perfect and divine. In touching your lover and bringing her pleasure you are both honoring the Goddess in her. As you touch yourself, because you too are connected to the Goddess, you, are also worshiping the divine.

If your tastes run towards s/m, you can be goddesses one at a time, and don't forget the binding and scourging.

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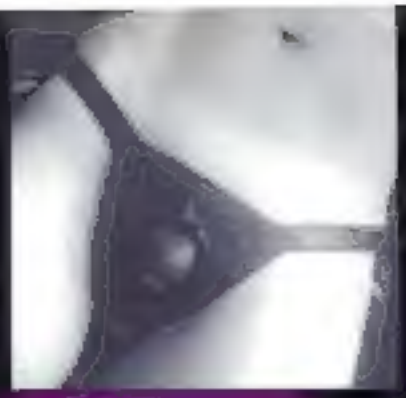

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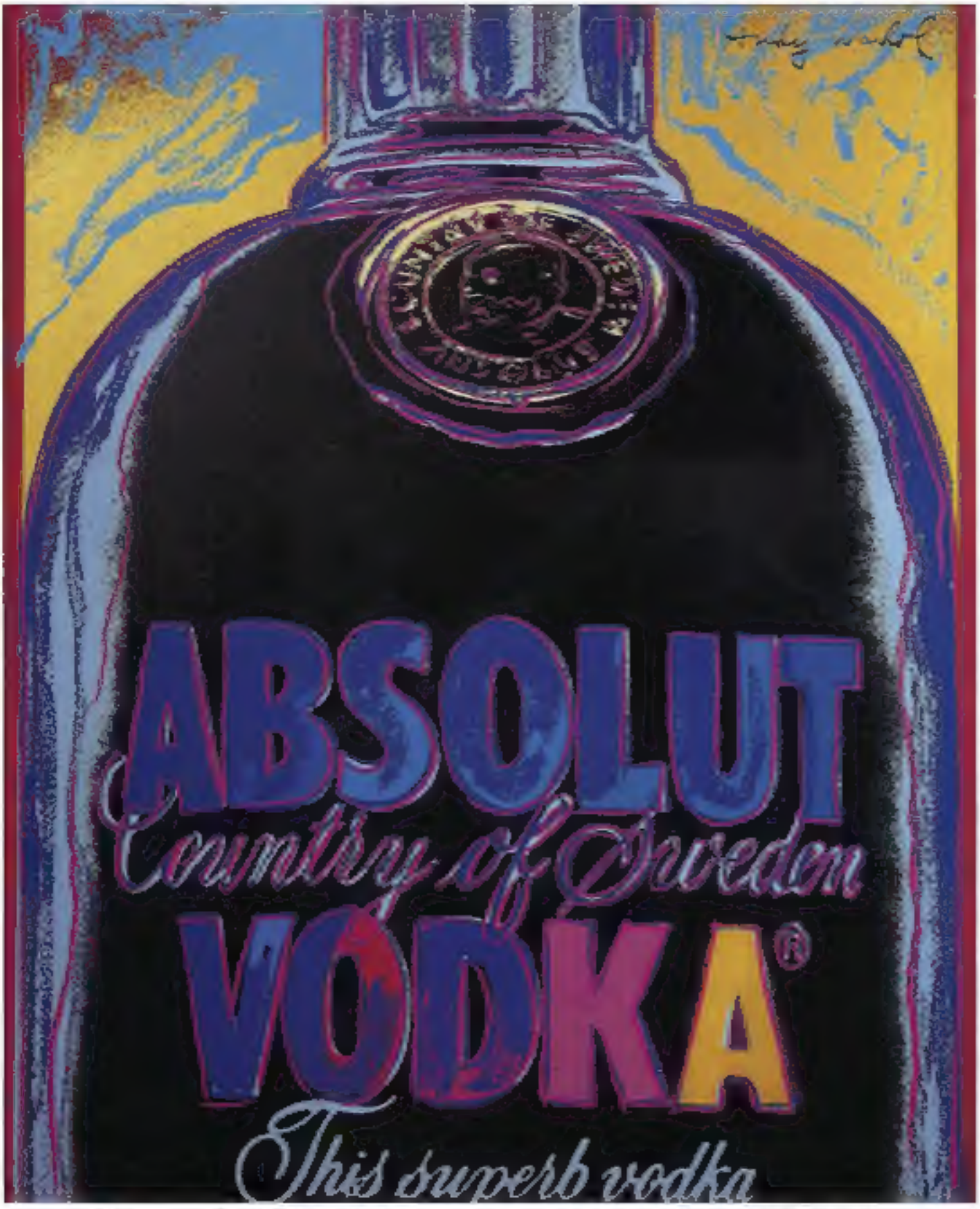

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